Remarks by Donald C. Winter
Secretary of the Navy
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Admiral Roughead, thank you for that kind and generous introduction. It is a great pleasure to have you as our Chief of Naval Operations, and I look forward to working with you over the next year to further the interests discussed at this conference.

I am very pleased to be here today, and pleased to see such a strong turnout of naval leadership on the part of those representing nearly all the nations of the world with maritime interests.

This conference is a unique forum for maritime nations to discuss the many issues that impact the security and prosperity of every nation.

I have had an opportunity over the past two years to visit many of your countries, and engage with the maritime forces of nations in virtually every region of the world. I understand the value of engagement, and I am fully supportive of pursuing cooperative partnerships as we go forward.

Today's challenges call for a re-assessment of our maritime strategy.

Many obvious changes in the strategic picture have occurred since the end of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall. And yet, many of the strategic imperatives of the United States—particularly with respect to the maritime component of the strategic equation—remain unchanged.

The Navy's bedrock obligation to the American people to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic, requires that we maintain a Navy with certain indispensable attributes.

Worldwide presence, credible deterrence and dissuasion capability, an ability to project power from Naval platforms anywhere on the globe, and the ability to prevail at sea are the non-negotiable elements of the U.S. Navy's strategic posture.

The realities of America's interests and position in the world remain fixed. The United States is a maritime power, bounded by the sea to the east and west. The health of our economy depends on safe transit through the seas—and the trend in international

commerce is ever upward. The strength of a nation's Navy remains an essential measure of a great power's status and role in the world.

All these realities suggest that **maritime dominance**—which has been a cornerstone of U.S. military strategy since World War II—is still indispensable to America's security interests.

Therefore, our maritime strategy reflects enduring strategic imperatives and interests.

This strategy builds upon changes that have already been underway for some time, and formally endorses operations that we are already carrying out.

The shift in focus from blue to green and brown water threats began in the 1990s. This shift has resulted in a Navy and Marine Corps that is focused on the full spectrum of possible threats.

We must manage a portfolio of capabilities to defend against a range of threats—from criminals and terrorists at sea, to rogue nations, to potential competitors.

This array of threats complicates our task considerably. Organizing, training, and equipping Naval forces in order to execute our core missions now requires an ability to meet the challenges posed by threats of unpredictable nature and geographic location.

And yet our core missions in the Joint fight are unaffected by this development.

Providing combat airpower, carrying out land attack missions, providing amphibious assault capability, providing military logistics, and executing strike missions at sea continue to be our *raison d'etre*.

Faced with these requirements, we are diversifying the fleet. We are developing new littoral capabilities: the first Riverine force since Vietnam has already been deployed to the Euphrates River. We are conducting maritime security operations in the littorals of the Northern Arabian Gulf. These operations are aimed at both protecting oil platforms and protecting shipping in and out of this vital body of water.

In shipbuilding, we are embarked on a program to build 55 Littoral Combat Ships, with two competing configurations scheduled for sea trials in the coming year. Our 30-year shipbuilding program—which already reflects our plans for LCS—is unchanged; our aircraft procurement schedule remains on track; and our end strength targets will not change as a result of our new strategy. There is no deviation from our plan to reach at

least 313 ships, and maintain 11 nuclear-powered carriers, 48 SSN's, and 14 SSBN's.

Meanwhile, to better meet the challenges of the 21st century, our new maritime strategy also embraces new core capabilities in the areas of maritime security and humanitarian assistance. Public discussion of our new maritime strategy has tended to focus on these particular elements of soft Naval power. However, there should not be an over-emphasis on any one aspect of our strategy.

Let there be no mistake: we are not walking away from, diminishing, or retreating in any way from those elements of hard power that win wars—or deter them from ever breaking out in the first place.

We do view cooperative engagement as essential to our maritime strategy. But our increased emphasis on maritime partnerships and the "1000 ship Navy concept" is not a repudiation of the Mahanian insistence on U.S. Navy maritime dominance.

Yes, the size of the U.S. fleet today is, less than half the fleet size of only 20 years ago. However, it would be a mistake to interpret that development as a lack of capability or intent to pursue our longstanding policy of maritime dominance.

The issue of assessing our Navy as a function of the number of ships vs. the capability of those ships is often debated.

Yes, presence matters. It matters a lot.

But an almost exclusive focus on the number of ships in the fleet can be very misleading—even dishonest.

Capabilities also matter.

In fact, given a choice between the nearly 600-ship Navy of 20 years ago, and today's fleet, I doubt there is anyone who would have the slightest hesitation in choosing our current fleet.

We have a surge capability today that did not exist before, thanks to a deliberate policy of increased investment in maintenance and sustainment—both of which are critical to readiness. After all, having a ready fleet is better than having a larger fleet incapable of surging.

We have platforms with weapons system capabilities which are superior to those on ships in earlier fleets. We have a lethality and flexibility in our surface, submarine, naval aviation, and expeditionary forces that have never been seen before. The reality is

that today's combatants are second to none—particularly when compared to combatants of yesteryear.

We cannot afford to lessen our commitment to the Navy because we cannot escape the need for global presence, strategic deterrence, and an enhanced missile defense capability. Moreover, I see no trends that call for any diminution in these strategic requirements.

Thus, Mahan's principles still apply and still guide our thinking. However, there was no way that one could have anticipated the range of concerns that energize Naval leaders today—weapons proliferation and the trafficking of arms, people, and narcotics.

There is also an aspect of protecting the maritime domain globally today that is different—the vulnerabilities to disruptions to the world economy are far greater than what anyone could have imagined.

Take the example of the suicide bomber attacks on ABOT — Iraq's most important oil terminal — in April of '04. Even though the attack failed, it had repercussions on world markets. The price of oil immediately spiked, and insurance rates skyrocketed, costing the world's economy billions of dollars. Even those who had no ties to that oil—who were neither producers nor consumers of oil coming from those platforms—were significantly affected.

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We worry about what happens in the Mediterranean Sea, in the Gulf of Guinea, in the Caribbean, on the great expanses of the Pacific Ocean—and everywhere in between. The issue is not simply a matter of energy resources, but legal and illegal trafficking, weapons smuggling, and economic lifelines to every nation.

Mahan looked at choke points such as Panama, Suez, and Gibraltar.

Today, however, the number of vulnerable points in the global economy is enormous, and the potential impact is huge.

Getting to the level of security we desire would require not a 600-ship Navy, or even a 1000-ship Navy. We would need thousands of ships to police all the world's sea lanes—an impossible task for any one nation.

With 315,000 miles of coastline—enough to circle the globe 12 times—we must find a way to keep the sea lanes open against threats from terrorists, pirates, and nations

not committed to upholding the international order.

We must recognize that we have fundamental dependencies—all of us. The fact is, we are dependent on a secure maritime environment. We have seen that massive dislocations can be caused by interrupting a very small fraction of the oil market, but other key commodities can be similarly affected.

World markets are very efficient today. We have very little excess capacity, and capital gets reallocated quickly to its most efficient use. Such efficiency raises productivity and standards of living—but leaves us very vulnerable to minor perturbations in the world market.

Thus, we are living not just in an age of asymmetric warfare, but of unprecedented global interdependence.

We must guard against the clandestine expansion of nuclear networks, terrorist attacks at sea, hostage-taking at sea, and maritime banditry.

Since we cannot patrol every choke point or platform target, or intercept every ship that is in violation of international law, we can only have maritime security if all nations come together to enforce a peaceful environment in their own region. This partnering with other nations is an opportunity to learn from each other, share unique knowledge and experience, improve our interoperability, increase transparency, and build trust between our Navy and the maritime forces of every nation.

I saw these results during my visits to Ghana, Djibouti, Guatemala, and many other countries over the past 2 years, all of which reinforced in my mind the importance of our cooperative efforts. Our partnerships with other nations enhance our security when our interests are in common, and therefore we will continue to pursue them wherever possible.

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In closing, I would like to share an anecdote about my office that is highly relevant to this discussion of our maritime strategy.

It is common for U.S. Secretaries to have a portrait in their office of a former Secretary whom they hold in high regard. I have a portrait of Theodore Roosevelt in my office. I consider him an inspiration.

Theodore Roosevelt, as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and later, of course, the 26th President of the United States, was a passionate believer in the virtue of Naval power.

Roosevelt understood that no fine-sounding words, no treaty, no gathering of diplomats expressing their peaceful intentions can forge diplomatic solutions without hard power to back them up. Words not supported by the implicit understanding of what would follow—should words fail—are empty.

He lived by the credo. And so should we.

Successful diplomacy is made possible by the capability evidenced by Naval power. Our strategy reflects that message.

Thus, as we soon approach the 100th Anniversary of the sailing of Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet—which I look forward to celebrating with many of you over the coming year—it is appropriate to reflect upon his vision.

Combining both hard and soft aspects of Naval power, we are building the fleet of the future while also seeking to strengthen cooperative partnerships with traditional allies, and develop new partnerships with other maritime nations.

The future of the United States as a great nation depends on our continued maritime superiority, and long-term perspective, and a cooperative approach towards all nations who share the maritime domain.

Thank you.